Action Committee on the Rural Economy

Rural Employment Subcommittee Final Report

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March 21, 2005

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Summary of Recommendations

1. Business Friendly Employment Environment

Rural Employment 1

ACRE recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan establish a Labour-Business Council, which would focus on private sector labour issues including those in rural Saskatchewan. A mechanism is required for labour and business to foster dialogue, develop mutual respect and develop areas of agreement.

The council would be made up of:

- **Six representatives recommended by the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce who would then appoint a co-chair;**
- **Six representatives recommended by the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour, who would then appoint a co-chair; and**
- **Secretariat: Saskatchewan Agriculture, Food and Rural Revitalization, Labour and Industry and Resources. The committee would report to these ministers.**

Functions would include an evaluation of the manner in which the legislation is functioning, the identification of problems and recommendations for legislative amendments.

It is important that each organization be allowed to assign the representatives without obtaining consensus from government or from the other party.

The committee would start with "big picture" discussions to develop a relationship and build trust. They would then move to discuss more controversial issues.

2. Education and Skills Training

A. Apprenticeship Training

Rural Employment 2

ACRE recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan improve access to apprenticeship training in rural Saskatchewan by introducing a program similar to Alberta's Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP is a special program that allows students to get started on an apprenticeship during high school and get paid for their work.)

Rural Employment 3

ACRE recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan press the federal government to speed up the time taken for apprentices to receive Employment Insurance benefits when on education leave.

Rural Employment 4

ACRE recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan establish an apprenticeship training tax credit that would encourage employers to hire and train apprentices in certain skilled trades.

Rural Employment 5

ACRE recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan provide further funding and that the Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission expand its efforts to recruit and train Aboriginal apprentices.

Rural Employment 6

ACRE recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan create a trade job bank that matches potential employers and/or sponsors with interested employees/students.

Rural Employment 7

ACRE recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan increase flexibility in compulsory training ratios related to apprenticeship certification for rural and small businesses.

B. Funding for Trades Training

Rural Employment 8

ACRE recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan place a renewed emphasis on training for the trades, and enhance trade learning by providing more funding for SIAST and the Regional Colleges.

C. Access to Enhanced Skills Training

Rural Employment 9

ACRE recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan increase the in-community rural delivery of various types of training through the Regional Colleges, SIAST, universities, and other means. New delivery options for rural Saskatchewan need to be explored that provide for both theory and practical training. Additional funding would be required to fund additional training in rural Saskatchewan.

Rural Employment 10

ACRE recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan require primary schools to begin career counseling in grade school to increase awareness of careers (especially trades) and understanding of training choices, and require secondary schools to enhance career development and counseling services.

Rural Employment 11

ACRE recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan make further efforts to build relationships between Aboriginal individuals, communities and groups, involved governments, educational institutions and employers to provide adequate opportunities for Aboriginal students. More must be done to respond to the training needs and initiatives of Aboriginal people.

Rural Employment 12

ACRE recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan increase Basic Education programming and the Provincial Training Allowance to enroll more students in Basic Education.

3. Immigration

Rural Employment 13

ACRE recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan substantially expand the existing programs (Saskatchewan Immigrant Nominee Program and Migrant Workers' Program) in response to identified skill and worker shortages.

Rural Employment 14

ACRE recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan continue ongoing identification of employment skill needs and labour shortages.

Rural Employment 15

ACRE recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan enhance cultural and other support mechanisms for immigrants, such as: language, settlement funding and recognition of bona fide foreign credentials.

Rural Employment 16

ACRE recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan aggressively examine the barriers faced by immigrants, and promote immigration programs to employers and potential immigrants.

ACRE Rural Employment Subcommittee

Background
In support of ACRE's goal to develop a network of strong dynamic rural communities all across Saskatchewan, the Employment Sub-committee (Appendix I) was established with a mandate to provide recommendations to government to enhance employer's ability to create employment opportunities in rural Saskatchewan. To accomplish this mandate, the committee identified several key areas to focus its efforts. These include:

Competitive Skills
- Improve the competitiveness of rural employers by enhancing the core skills (Appendix II) of both management and labour. Competitiveness increasingly depends on the ability to obtain and use information, technology and new management techniques.

Access to Training and Development
- Provide rural Saskatchewan with reasonable access to post secondary, technical and professional training and development.

Aboriginal Engagement in Labour Force
- Provide mechanisms to actively engage aboriginal and, in particular, aboriginal youth in rural development and employment initiatives.

Encourage Living in Rural Saskatchewan
- Encourage new Saskatchewan residents to live in rural Saskatchewan by promoting the benefits and providing adequate support services.

Address Labour Relations Issues
- Foster a harmonious labour relations climate.

Like many parts of North America, Saskatchewan has seen a significant decline in its rural economy and rural population. Much of this decline can be attributed to a larger regional restructuring that has transgressed borders in both Canada and the US. Saskatchewan is part of the Great Plains Economy, which includes Saskatchewan, Manitoba and the Mid-Western United States.

Throughout this region, over the past 50 plus years, there has been a general population decline (Appendix III). Much of this decline can be attributed to the technological revolution that has occurred in agriculture resulting in increasing farm size and declining farm employment. This technological revolution has been good for society as efficiency gains have translated into lower food prices, but has come at the expense of rural economies due to declining rural populations.

As technology evolved, a population shift occurred, not just from rural to urban but within the Great Plains region itself as people have relocated to the mountain west region (Alberta/BC) and east-central regions (Ontario/Quebec) see Appendix IV. This population shift raises a larger question, did people follow the jobs or did the jobs follow the people? In many instances, population redistribution occurred for lifestyle reasons as well as employment reasons as people relocated to other areas for cultural and recreational purposes.

Rural Saskatchewan's agricultural restructuring is nearing completion. In 1930, 60 per cent of Saskatchewan's work force was in agriculture. In 2003, less than 10 per cent of Saskatchewan's workforce was in agriculture. Since people will remain in agriculture, we know most of the decline in agriculture is over, so stabilization will soon be able to occur.

Other sectors such as tourism, manufacturing, mining and forestry will now play a much larger role in rural economies and will need to be more of the basis for future growth in rural Saskatchewan.

As a consequence, future rural employment policy will need to have a greater focus on these sectors in order to foster development in rural Saskatchewan.

While Saskatchewan's employment and population struggles have been part of a larger geographic phenomenon, we still have not performed as well as expected given our industry mix. Between 1996 and 2003, Saskatchewan had the lowest employment growth of all provinces. During this period, Canadian employment grew by 17 per cent, while Saskatchewan employment only grew by 6.5 per cent.

Rural depopulation is occurring everywhere across Canada, but Saskatchewan is the only province that registered a decline in rural employment between 1996 and 2003. Statistics have illustrated, that while there was a net decline in Saskatchewan's rural employment of approximately five per cent or 9,100 jobs, almost all industries, other than agriculture, increased rural employment over this period. However, the increases in other sectors were not enough to offset the losses in the agriculture sector.

On a positive note, Saskatchewan's employment rate is one of the highest in the country at approximately 85 per cent. Given that Saskatchewan's population has remained relatively static over the past 10 years, the lack of employment growth in the province and high employment rate illustrates that overall employment growth is linked to population growth. This brings us back to the question, do people follow the jobs or do jobs follow the people?

Canadian and Western Canadian Skills Development Context

In the 2002 Social Development Canada document, *Knowledge Matters: Skills and Learning for Canadians* the following is stated:

> "Countries that succeed in the 21st century will be those with citizens who are creative, adaptable and skilled. Our people - their skills, talents, knowledge and creativity - are the key to our future success. By providing opportunities for all Canadians to learn and to develop their skills and abilities, we can achieve our commitment to economic growth and prosperity and demonstrate our social values of inclusion and equality.

Three key imperatives are driving us to take action:

First, the knowledge-based economy means an ever-increasing demand for a well educated and skilled workforce in all parts of the economy and in all parts of the country.

- All aspects of the way we live and work, the way we produce and consume, are in the midst of a profound transformation as a result of the revolution in information and communications technologies and the rise of the global knowledge-based economy.
- The skills required for many conventional occupations are changing rapidly, and many skills are quickly becoming dated as new jobs, new technologies and new industries emerge. For example, truck drivers now need to know how to use global positioning systems, students work online in "networked" classrooms, crane operators work with sophisticated onboard computers, and individual investors conduct stock market transactions from their home computers.
- By 2004, more than 70 per cent of all new jobs created in Canada will require some form of post secondary education and only 6 per cent of new jobs will be held by those who have not finished high school.
- Canada is already facing structural skills shortages in a range of occupations, such as nursing, engineering and management.

Second, there is a looming demographic crunch that means our future labour supply will be inadequate to meet the demands of the economy.

- More than half of the workforce of 2015 is already in the labour market.
- The next cohort of youth workers will be smaller than in the past.
- Too many Canadians are currently outside the workforce. There is a sharp divide in labour force participation rates for low-skilled and high-skilled Canadians (56 per cent vs. 79 per cent).
- By 2011, immigration will account for all net labour force growth in Canada.

Third, our learning system must be strengthened if we are to meet the skills and labour force demands of the next decades.

- Our system of supports and services for early childhood development does not reach as many young families as it should.
- Canada has strong primary and secondary education systems. Today's generation of young Canadians is the best educated in our history. Yet one in eight young Canadians does not complete high school, and one in four graduates, but lacks the literacy skills necessary to participate in the knowledge-based economy.
- Canadians have the highest level of participation in post-secondary education in the world. However, Canada's education advantage is diminishing as other countries raise their college and university participation rates.
- To remain competitive and keep up with the accelerating pace of technological change, Canada must continuously renew and upgrade the skills of its workforce. We can no longer assume that the skills acquired in youth will carry workers

through their active lives. Rather, the working life of most adults must be a period of continuous learning.

- Adults with jobs do not have enough opportunities to "earn while they learn." The proportion of adult Canadians participating in workplace training has been stagnant since the early 1990s. The participation of Canadian workers in formal learning is only average, compared with other industrialized countries.

The federal government will consider actions in a number of areas related to post-secondary education. These actions will be discussed with provincial and territorial governments and with stakeholders:

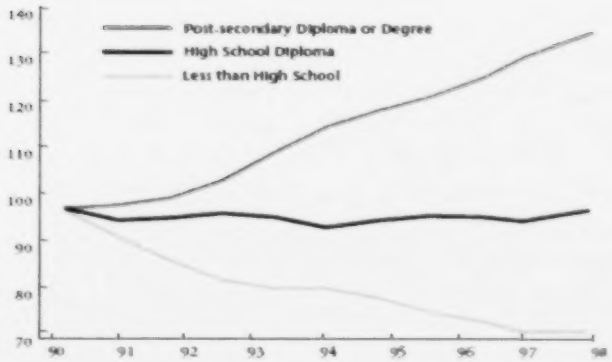
1. Make post-secondary education more financially accessible to low income Canadians.
2. Encourage low income and moderate income Canadians currently in the workforce to participate in post-secondary education by "learning while they earn."
3. Facilitate mobility and access to post-secondary education for adult learners and students.
4. Encourage Canadians to look to skilled trades for employment.
5. Build on the expertise of community colleges.
6. Increase the number of highly qualified people.

The Government of Canada has identified four goals for moving Canada forward:

1. To give our children and youth the best possible start in life.
2. All qualified Canadians have access to high quality post secondary education.
3. To ensure Canada's current and emerging workforce is more highly skilled and adaptable.
4. To ensure that Canada continues to attract the highly skilled immigrants it needs and helps them to achieve their full potential in Canadian society and the labour market."

Employment Growth by Highest Level of Education

Index (1990=100)



Source: Industry Canada compilations based on Statistics Canada data

In a press release in January 2005 the Canada West Foundation has noted the following:

> "Western Canada's unprecedented economic boom could turn into a bust, according to a groundbreaking Canada West Foundation report released today at a meeting of business and community leaders at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT).
>
> Canada West Foundation Chief Economist Todd Hirsch warned that, with increased activity in key economic sectors, projected skills shortages could hinder growth, send companies and individuals elsewhere looking for opportunities, and change our way of life.
>
> In his report, *Toward a Bright Future: Recommendations for Addressing Skills Shortages in Western Canada*, Hirsch says 73 of the 76 major industry associations in the West expect moderate to severe worker shortages within the next five years. 41 of those associations said the number of students currently graduating from post-secondary institutes will not be enough to meet the demands of their industries.
>
> In *Toward a Bright Future*, Hirsch proposes 10 recommendations as to how industry, government and post-secondary institutes can work together to ensure there are enough skilled workers to get the job done. More on the job training, expanding Aboriginal involvement in the workforce, and increasing awareness among young people of opportunities in the trades are some of the ten recommendations in Hirsch's report.
>
> "Large companies in the West are doing many innovative things with regards to recruiting and skills training, but some serious gaps remain," Hirsch said.

"Economies are driven by people, and we must act now to make sure we have the people that businesses need to continue to thrive."

"Shortages of skilled labour," he added, "are having a serious impact on some sectors and in some regions in the West," Hirsch said. "It's critical that government, post-secondary education, and industry work cooperatively to address these shortages. There is no silver bullet but there are some practical, concrete actions that could help alleviate the shortages."

The Canada West Report does note that: "It is important to qualify this shortage of skilled labour. The shortages are not present in all sectors, nor are there shortages in all parts of the West. Certain industries and areas have not enjoyed the current economic expansion with some areas (especially rural) on a long-term economic contraction trajectory. But with this qualification in mind, some economic sectors and some geographic areas are experiencing a shortage of skilled labour that is frustrating industry and holding back economic expansion."

The ten recommendations in *Toward a Bright Future* are:

1. Increase financial resources for post-secondary education.
2. Place a more regional focus on the federal government's Sector Council Program (HRSDC), while maintaining national standards.
3. Break the link between funding for training and EI eligibility in the Labour Market Development Agreements (LMDA).
4. Improve quality and timeliness of shared information on labour demand.
5. Use tax credits to encourage companies to do more direct on-the-job training.
6. Work collaboratively to change perceptions about careers in the trades.
7. Increase training and skills development for Aboriginal peoples.
8. Increase targeted immigration through the Provincial Nominee Program.
9. Increase flexibility of post secondary institutions in the establishment and delivery of programs.
10. Work to improve transferability of credits between post secondary institutions."

Saskatchewan Labour Force Trends

In a recent study entitled, Saskatchewan Labour Market Trends, 2004 Update (November 2004), Doug Elliot of Sask Trends Monitor, addressed labour force trend implications for Saskatchewan as follows:

1. "The population in the 5 to 18 year age group declines, reducing the population of elementary/secondary education students. At the same time there will be an increase in both the size of, and the proportion of, the population needing post secondary education. An increasing proportion of both kinds of students will be aboriginal.
2. Completed education levels for the Saskatchewan population are currently below the national average. The forecasted increase in participation rates will be difficult without a significant improvement in those education levels.
3. The forecasted improvement in general participation rates implicitly assumes an increase in the labour force participation rates among the young aboriginal population

over the next 10 to 15 years. At present these individuals are either young children or teens; all are either in the elementary/secondary school system or will be entering it in five years.

4. In a tight labour market, skill shortages will become more common and employers will have difficulty recruiting qualified staff. Increases in compensation will be required to attract workers to the province because similar demographics will put pressure on the labour market in most other provinces.
5. The tight labour market will not manifest itself all at once as a sudden shortage of workers, but rather as an increasingly frequent series of shortages in specific industries and occupations.
6. The possibility exists that a general labour shortage will limit economic growth in the province. The timing and extent of any such impact depends on a host of complex interactions in the labour market, the rate of labour and capital productivity growth, and the skill levels of the workforce.
7. Other potential sources for growth in the labour force may have to be examined, particularly if the forecasted increase in participation rates fails to occur:
   a. Saskatchewan may need to become more successful in attracting and retaining international immigrants.
   b. Pension plans may have to be modified to enable and encourage older workers to remain in the labour force beyond "normal" retirement.
   c. Populations with traditionally low labour force participation rates – those with a disability or those on social assistance, for example – are another potential source of employees."

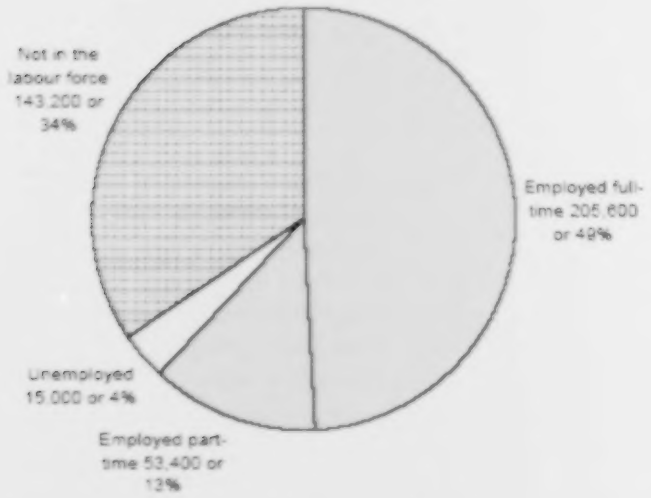
Rural Saskatchewan Context

In a survey done by Sigma Analytics in October 2002, it was found that 77 per cent of Saskatchewan residents surveyed felt that smaller communities are better places to live than larger ones. A large majority of respondents living in communities less than 5,000 (90 per cent) feel that small communities are a better place to live. Support falls to 73 per cent in communities between 5,000 and 20,000, and to 63 per cent in communities greater than 20,000.

In Saskatchewan as a whole, 70 per cent of respondents feel the region they call home has afforded them the opportunity to reach their full career potential. 66 per cent of those in communities smaller than 5,000 feel the area in which they live has afforded them the opportunity to reach their full career potential. This is 67 per cent in communities from 5,000 to 20,000 and 76 per cent in communities greater than 20,000.)

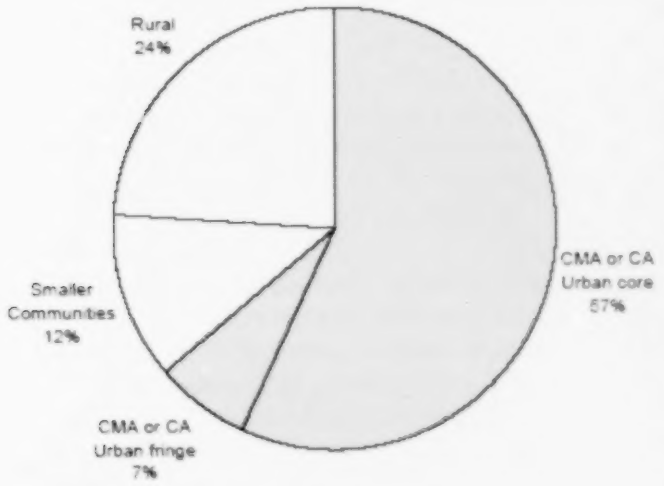
The following are excerpts from a March 2004 presentation on "Rural Employment in Saskatchewan", by Doug Elliott of Sask Trends Monitor.

Rural Labour Force in 2003
(Saskatchewan excluding Regina and Saskatoon CMAs)
Total population 15 & older = 417,200



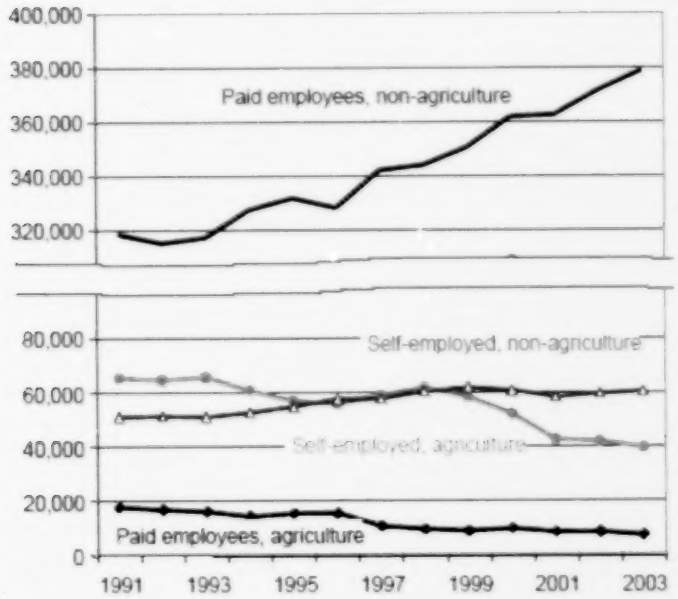
- This pie shows the labour force using the broad definition of rural, that is, all of Saskatchewan except the Regina and Saskatoon CMAs.
- Among the adult (15 and older) population in rural Saskatchewan, 259,000 or 62% were **employed** in an average month in 2003.
- 15,000 or 4% were **unemployed** - that is, not working but actively looking for work.
- The remaining 143,200 or 34% are classified as **not in the labour force**. This group includes those who are not actively seeking employment as well as those who have no intention of working.

Employment by Residence, Saskatchewan 2003



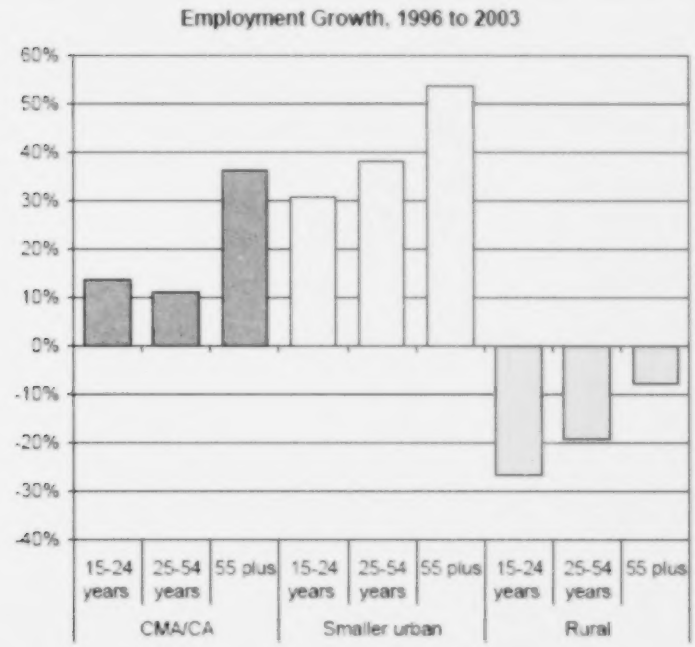
- Almost two thirds (64%) of workers in Saskatchewan live in or near the province's eight largest centres.
- Another 12% live in smaller urban centres (population 1,000 to 10,000) and the remaining 24% live in rural Saskatchewan.

Provincial Employment Patterns - by Categories



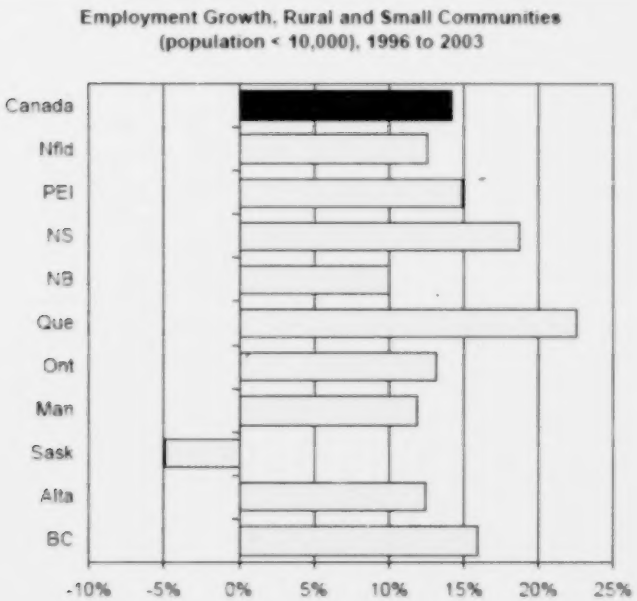
- There has been relatively steady growth for paid employees outside of agriculture.
- The number of self-employed outside of agriculture has stalled at 60,000.
- In effect, employment in Saskatchewan increases when the non-agriculture sector grows fast enough to offset the decline in agricultural employment.

Employment Patterns - by Age and Residence



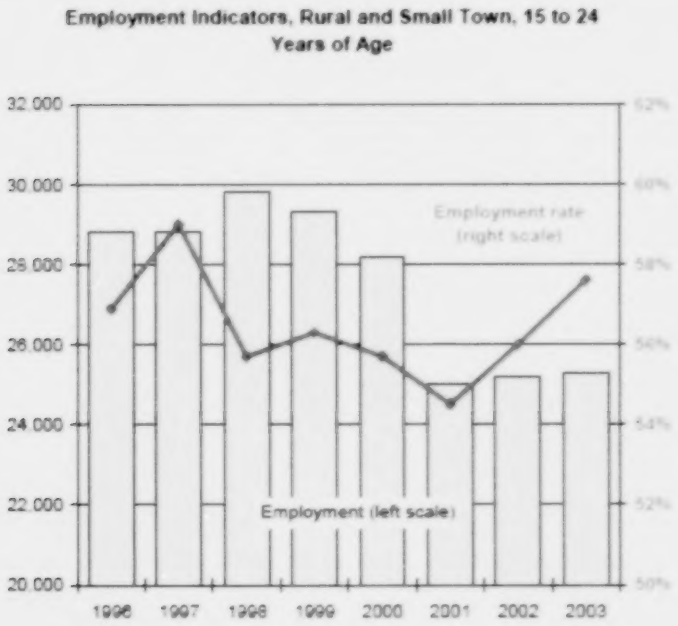
- There is employment growth in all age groups in both large and small urban centres including growth in youth employment.

Rural Employment - Inter-provincial Comparisons

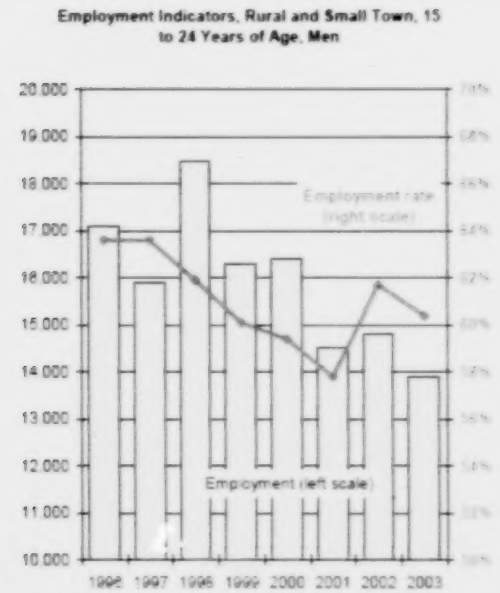


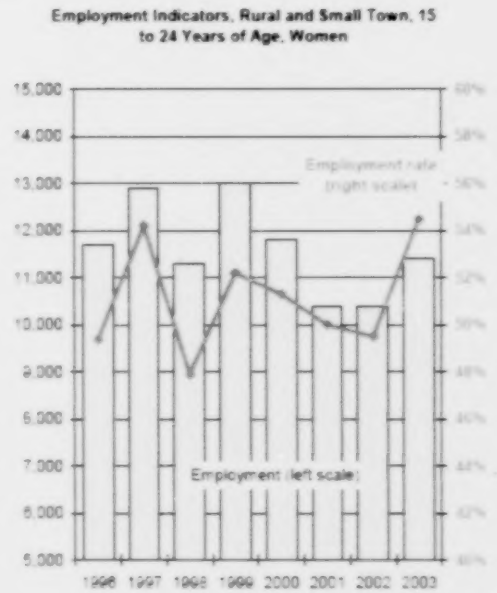
- While rural depopulation is a national trend, Saskatchewan is the only province that registered a decline in rural employment from 1996 to 2003.
- The situation is clearly more serious than in other provinces.

Rural Employment Patterns - Youth



Rural Employment Patterns for Youth - by Gender



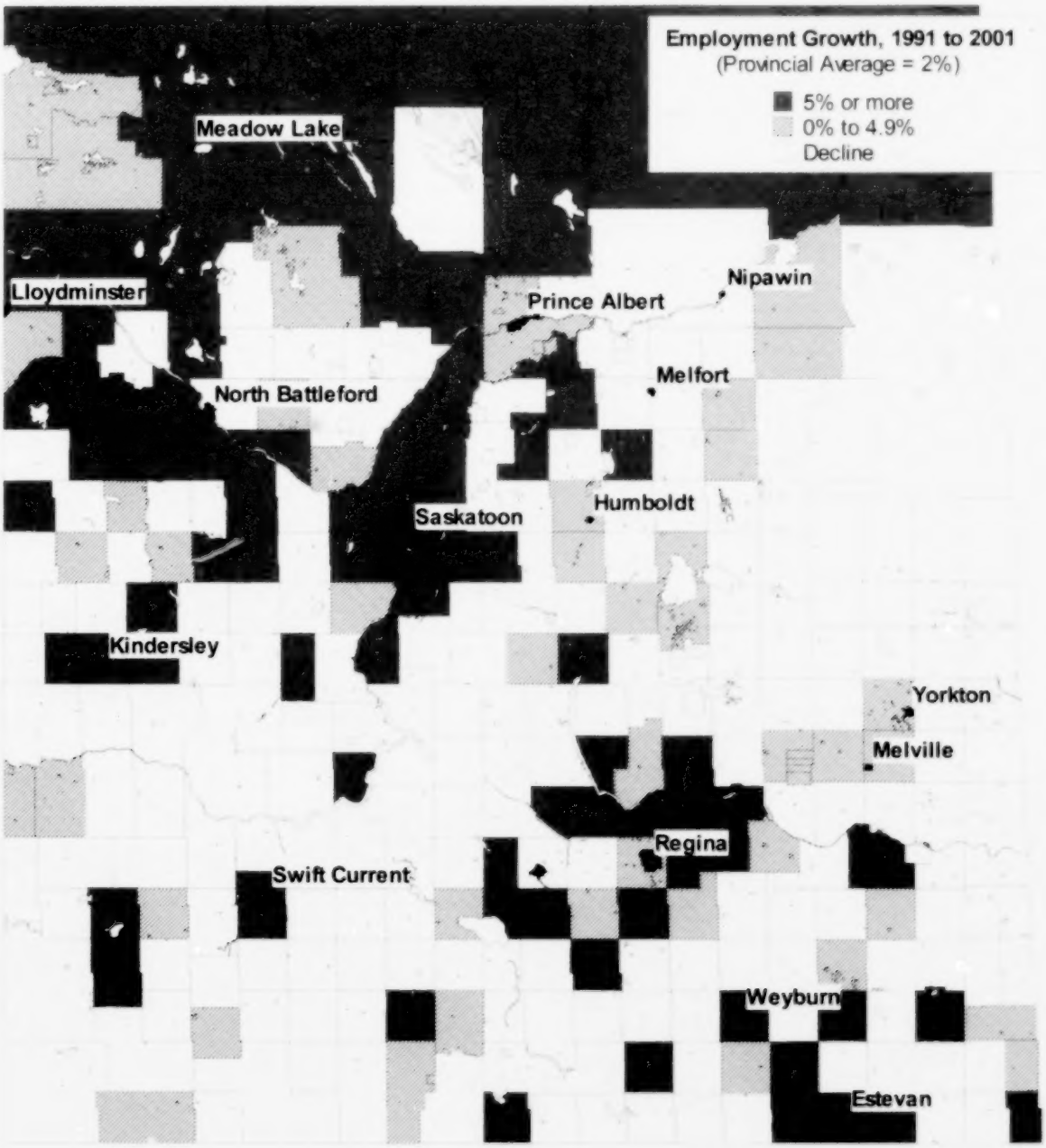


Rural Employment Growth by Industry, 1996 to 2003

	Employment (main job)		Change from 1996 to 2003	
	1996	2003	Absolute	Percentage
Goods-producing sector				
Agriculture	63,500	42,400	(21,100)	-33%
Mining, oil and gas, forestry, fishing	8,400	11,500	3,100	37%
Water, Electric, Gas Utilities	1,000	1,900	1,100	122%
Construction	6,700	7,600	900	13%
Manufacturing and processing	8,100	7,700	(400)	-5%
	87,700	71,100	(16,600)	-19%
Services-producing sector				
Wholesale and retail trade	23,700	24,900	1,200	5%
Transportation and warehousing	8,900	8,900	0	0%
Finance and insurance, real estate	6,600	6,900	300	5%
Professional, scientific & technical services	2,400	2,900	500	21%
Business, building and other support	2,700	2,400	(300)	-11%
Information, culture and recreation	2,800	3,600	800	29%
Accommodation and food services	8,500	8,800	300	4%
Other private sector services	8,100	8,900	800	10%
Educational services	10,700	13,000	2,300	21%
Health care and social assistance	15,900	18,900	3,000	19%
Public administration	7,100	5,700	(1,400)	-20%
	97,400	104,900	7,500	8%
Total, all industries	**185,100**	**176,000**	**(9,100)**	**-5%**

Source : Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey

Note: Rural – under 10,000 population



Note the entire RM including the urban areas and réserves within it are aggregated in this map

Source: Map by Sask Trends Monitor – Data Statistics Canada Census

Rationale For Recommendations

1. **Business Friendly Employment Environment**

Mark Partridge, University of Saskatchewan believes that past policy in Saskatchewan has not had a big influence on the depopulation of the rural economy. However, it will have a larger influence in the future if the rural/provincial economy is to grow as we shift from an agricultural based economy to other primary resources and enhanced manufacturing. Consequently, Saskatchewan must create an environment where employees and employers can address the public policy and workplace challenges in a collaborative way.

Saskatchewan ranks third to Newfoundland/Labrador and Quebec in terms of the per cent of employees unionized. Manitoba is fourth with Alberta having the least percentage of employees unionized. In all provinces, the highest union rates are in public sector industries – health, social services, education, etc. Generally speaking, unionized jobs were found to provide higher earnings than non-unionized ones, (Perspectives, Autumn 2003, Statistics Canada). Interestingly, the split between urban and rural unionization is very close to 50:50.

Labour policy has created contention between business and organized labour for a number of years if not decades in Saskatchewan. *The Trade Union Act* and to a lesser degree *The Labour Standards Act* and *The Occupational Health and Safety Act* have been subject to considerable public debate. The ongoing animosity between employers and organized labour creates a real or perceived perception that the Saskatchewan labour environment is not business friendly, thus jeopardizing the opportunity for external investment. Ongoing growth and development of the provincial economy will be dependent upon both internal and external investment. A forum needs to be established that would begin to resolve the issues that are key to both employers and unionized labour in Saskatchewan.

Employers have identified their key concerns as:

- **Material Differences in Labour Laws Between Provinces**. Appendix V includes a comparison between labour legislation in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. For example, in Saskatchewan the provision for technological change requires employers to provide 90 days notice to the union and to the Minister before making a specified change. Consequently, it may be difficult to change quickly if unionized.
- **Definition of Employee**. Employers feel the line is blurred between management and employees.
- **Union Certification**. Concerns are associated with the method by which unions can become certified as well as the communication allowed between the employees and employer. In Saskatchewan, unions are formed with 50 per cent plus one signed card count. There is concern that employees can be pressured into signing cards. Six out of 11 jurisdictions in Canada have some type of card system. Alberta uses a mandatory vote system with a confidential vote.

Employer communication is not allowed during a union drive unless it is to defend themselves where information being presented is not factual. Employers feel that only one side of the debate is heard, communication by the employer is unduly limited and that it is not an informed process.

- **Attitude of Government.** Employers perceive there to be too much influence by unions on government policy decisions. They have concerns that *The Labour Standards Act* and *The Occupational Health and Safety Act* are being reviewed and that changes could negatively impact business.
- **Saskatchewan Labour Relations Board.** Employers have concerns with the interpretations of the Sask Labour Relations Board. Under *The Trade Union* Act, the Saskatchewan Labour Relations Board is composed of a chairperson and two vice-chairpersons appointed by Cabinet. The Act requires that members of the board be selected so that employers and organized employees are equally represented. The Board has 18 part-time members, representing either employees or employers, who are paid on a per diem basis when their services are required. Hearings are conducted by three person panels including either the Chairperson or a Vice-Chairperson, a member representing employers and a member representing employees.
- **Secondary Picketing.** Secondary picketing is permissible under the Charter of Rights. Employers would like to see Legislation that would limit secondary picketing.

Other Jurisdictions in Canada have established forums to help address business/labour issues:

British Columbia. The Minister may appoint a Committee of Special Advisors to undertake a continuing review of the code and labour management relations and, without limitation, to provide the Minister with, a) an annual evaluation of the manner in which the legislation is functioning and to identify problems that may have arisen under its provisions, b) recommendations for legislative amendments and c) make recommendations on any specific matter referred to it by the Minister. This committee has not always been active.

Manitoba. The Manitoba Labour Management Review Committee (LMRC) was formed in 1964 and is comprised of business and labour representatives. The committee provides a forum for discussion of labour and management issues. The Committee's mandate is to promote a harmonious labour relations climate and to foster effective labour management cooperation in support of the economic and social well being of Manitobans. When legislative changes are contemplated by government, the LMRC generally acts as a consultative body.

Ontario. Ontario has no formal review committee for all sectors. However, there is an Ontario Construction Secretariat and a Residential Construction Body that serve as discussion bodies on labour relations/economic matters. Ontario Labour officials feel both these committees have been effective as round tables on labour issues.

Quebec. The Conceil Consultatif Du Travail et de la Main-D'oeuvre or The Council (as it is referred to in English) advises the Minister of Labour on any question that the Minister

submits, respecting matters within his competence. Other ministers may also submit labour related questions for consideration. The council is comprised of the president and six persons chosen from among those who are recommended by the most representative associations of employees and the six persons chosen from among those who are recommended by the most representative employers' associations. The Council provides an annual report on its activities to the Minister of Labour.

Nova Scotia. The Nova Scotia government committed, prior to the last election, to the formation of a Tripartite Labour Relations Round Table. The round table is conceived to have representatives from the private sector, public sector and labour organizations. It will be designed to improve collective bargaining and to ensure the Nova Scotia labour climate supports a growing economy. Membership details are yet to be formulated.
The Nova Scotia Environment and Labour Department is considering using the "Canadian Labour and Business Centre" in Ottawa to be independent facilitators for their one day round table.

Prince Edward Island. The Industrial Relations Council that is appointed by cabinet was first put in place in the mid 1970s. It is comprised of nine members including a chair that serves at the pleasure of cabinet and four labour and four management representatives that are appointed for terms. They hold public hearings and then file reports on matters they are requested to examine.

Recommendation

Whereas it is appropriate to promote a harmonious labour relations climate and to foster effective labour management cooperation in support of economic development, investment and the social well being of Saskatchewan:

***Rural Employment* 1**

ACRE recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan establish a Labour-Business Council, which would focus on private sector labour issues including those in rural Saskatchewan. A mechanism is required for labour and business to foster dialogue, develop mutual respect and develop areas of agreement.

The council would be made up of:

- **6 representatives recommended by the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce who would then appoint a co-chair,**
- **6 representatives recommended by the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour, who would then appoint a co-chair.**
- **Secretariat: Saskatchewan Agriculture, Food and Rural Revitalization, Labour and Industry and Resources. The committee would report to these ministers.**

Functions would include an evaluation of the manner in which the legislation is functioning, the identification of problems and recommendations for legislative amendments.

It is important that each organization be allowed to assign the representatives without obtaining consensus from Government or from the other party.

The committee would start with "big picture" discussions to develop a relationship and build trust. They would then move to discuss more controversial issues.

2. Education and Skills Training

A. Apprenticeship Training

ACRE has identified a shortage of apprentices in certain trades, and has heard from stakeholders that the system does not appear to have adequate capacity to meet current and future needs. It will require several years to ramp up the number of qualified trained journey persons. Stakeholders have identified that the greatest shortage of trades is in rural Saskatchewan.

The Conference Board of Canada indicated in "Performance and Potential 2000-2001" that "We need to have a serious examination of how to improve apprenticeship programs. There is a shortage of tradespeople in Canada, and it will worsen over the next few years. Canada is not preparing to deal with this issue under the current apprenticeship programming."

The Canadian Apprenticeship Forum in the January 2004 report on "Accessing and Completing Apprenticeship Training in Canada," noted the following perceptions of barriers respecting apprenticeships:

1. "Negative attitudes to apprenticeship, and a poor image of the trades by young people, parents and employers.
2. A lack of information and awareness of apprenticeship, often reinforced by a lack of support for trades among schoolteachers and guidance counsellors, and within school curricula.
3. Some apprentices, particularly women, Aboriginal people, members of visible minority groups, recent immigrants, and persons with disabilities, face a number of barriers that can create an unwelcoming workplace or training environment.
4. The high costs of apprenticeship for individuals, unions and employers, including wage and supervision costs for employers and rising tuition and tool costs, and the income interruption caused by block release for individuals.
5. Strong concerns among employers, unions and individuals over the impacts of economic factors that can lead to a lack of work hours and interruptions or possibly terminations of apprenticeships.
6. Concerns regarding the lack of resources to support apprenticeship, including those of jurisdictions, schools, communities and agencies providing services to communities or groups of individuals.

7. Concerns, particularly on the part of employers, about apprentices' basic and essential skills.
8. Shortcomings of workplace based and technical training, for example, inflexible block release arrangements, a lack of flexible technical training options, a lack of mentorship programs, and journeypersons unprepared for roles as trainers and mentors.
9. Regulations governing apprenticeship, such as inflexible journeyperson/apprenticeship ratios and licensing requirements, and the absence of national standards or core curricula in some trades."

While a comprehensive study would be required to determine if such barriers exist in Saskatchewan comments from those consulted indicate that at least some of these trends apply in Saskatchewan.

Rural Employment 2

ACRE recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan improve access to apprenticeship training in rural Saskatchewan by introducing a program similar to Alberta's Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP is a special program that allows students to get started on an apprenticeship during high school and get paid for their work.)

ACRE has identified that the length of time taken for apprentices to receive federal Employment Insurance benefits when on education leave is an issue.

Rural Employment 3

ACRE recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan press the federal government to speed up the time taken for apprentices to receive Employment Insurance benefits when on education leave.

ACRE has identified that a tax credit program for apprentices could increase the capacity of the apprenticeship system. (A similar tax credit plan was proposed in the 2004 Ontario budget that would cost $11.7 million annually. In Ontario the Apprenticeship Training Tax Credit base amount is a refund of 25 per cent of salaries and wages to an eligible apprentice. Employers would qualify for a credit (paid to the employer) of up to $5,000 per eligible apprentice per year, with a $15,000 maximum over three years per employee.). Some feel that such a plan is a good way to increase the capacity of the apprenticeship system.

Rural Employment 4

ACRE recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan establish an apprenticeship training tax credit that would encourage employers to hire and train apprentices in certain skilled trades.

ACRE has identified that the number of Aboriginal apprentices has increased significantly in recent years, but more needs to be done.

Rural Employment 5

ACRE recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan provide further funding and that the Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission expand its efforts to recruit and train Aboriginal apprentices.

ACRE has identified that, matching potential employees to opportunities, would help those wanting to enter the trades and apprenticeship training to find an employer willing to sponsor them. It would also link students in pre-employment program with employers once they completed their technical training.

Rural Employment 6

ACRE recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan create a trade job bank that matches potential employers and/or sponsors with interested employees/students.

ACRE has identified that current apprenticeship rules require employers to have a ratio of one tradesperson to one apprentice in some instances. This is a hardship for small businesses.

Rural Employment 7

ACRE recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan increase flexibility in compulsory training ratios related to apprenticeship certification for rural and small businesses.

B. Funding for Trades Training

ACRE has identified that increased funding is needed for SIAST and the Regional Colleges to ensure adequate trades training.

Background

Current provincial funding towards the operational costs of prairie public post secondary institutions includes:

Prairie Post Secondary Operating Grants and Expenditures 2002-03 ($000s)

	Provincial Operating Funding	Per Cent	Operating Expenditures	Per Cent
Saskatchewan				
University	$221,561	66%	$608,081	77%
SIAST	$87,992	26%	$134,063	17%
Regional Colleges	$28,585	8%	$44,200	6%
Total	$338,138	100%	$786,344	100%
Alberta				
University	$571,845	54%	$1,652,921	63%
Technical Institutes	$168,372	16%	$345,307	13%
Public Colleges	$311,693	30%	$645,087	24%
Total	$1,051,910	100%	$2,643,315	100%
Manitoba				
University	$250,757	78%	$498,555	78%
Community Colleges (inc. technical)	$69,223	22%	$137,483	22%
Total	$319,980	100%	$636,038	100%

Sources: Saskatchewan and Alberta Learning Departments and Manitoba Council on Post Secondary Education.

Rural Employment 8

ACRE recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan place a renewed emphasis on training for the trades, and enhance trade learning by providing more funding for SIAST and the Regional Colleges.

C. Access to Enhanced Skills Training

Background

ACRE has identified that the current system is not adequately responsive to the needs in rural Saskatchewan. Many residents of rural Saskatchewan would like further training or to make the transition to another career area. Retraining is required as the types of jobs evolve. The types of systems available for training in rural areas of other provinces need to be fully considered. An effective system, that matches jobs, training positions and employer requirements, needs to be instituted. For various reasons, some people are unable to travel to major centres for training. Further, when people do attend training in major centres, many do not return to work in rural areas. There is a concern that Regional Colleges are not set up to adequately respond to the needs in rural areas, often due to a lack of funding. As well, the specific needs of Aboriginal communities and youth need to be addressed. Aboriginal people have specific mobility issues that make rural delivery even more vital.

Rural Employment 9

ACRE recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan increase the in-community rural delivery of various types of training through the Regional Colleges, SIAST, universities, and other means. New delivery options for rural Saskatchewan need to be explored that provide for both theory and practical training. Additional funding would be required to fund additional training in rural Saskatchewan.

ACRE has found that there is an inadequate knowledge of career options and training availability. In particular, specific attention must be addressed to career options for Aboriginal people.

Alberta's Tech Prep provides information on trades and technical courses. Initiatives from that program could be examined and considered for implementation in Saskatchewan.

Rural Employment 10

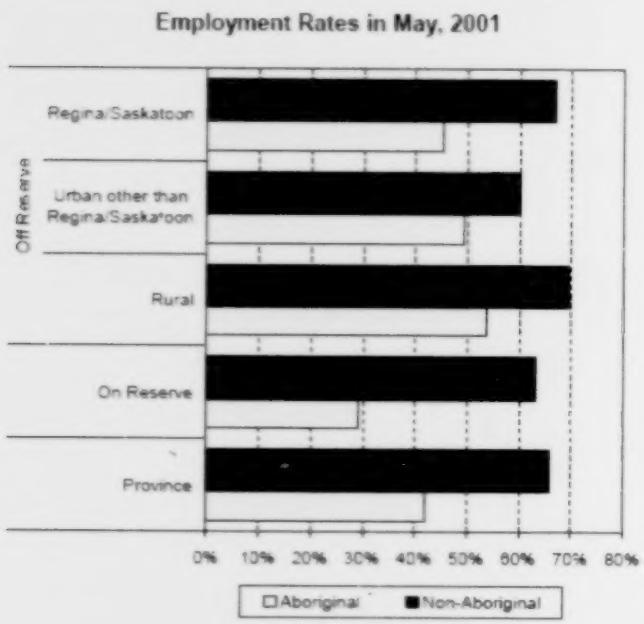
ACRE recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan require primary schools to begin career counseling in grade school to increase awareness of careers (especially trades) and understanding of training choices, and require secondary schools to enhance career development and counseling services.

ACRE realizes that today's Aboriginal population is tomorrow's workforce. Approximately 54 per cent of First Nations are under the age of 20, compared to 30 per cent for non-First Nations. The median age for First Nations is 18.4 compared to 38.8 for non-First Nations.

One of the top three demographic issues facing the province is aboriginal population/employment. The other two key demographic trends are the aging of the Saskatchewan population and the rural-urban shift in population/employment.

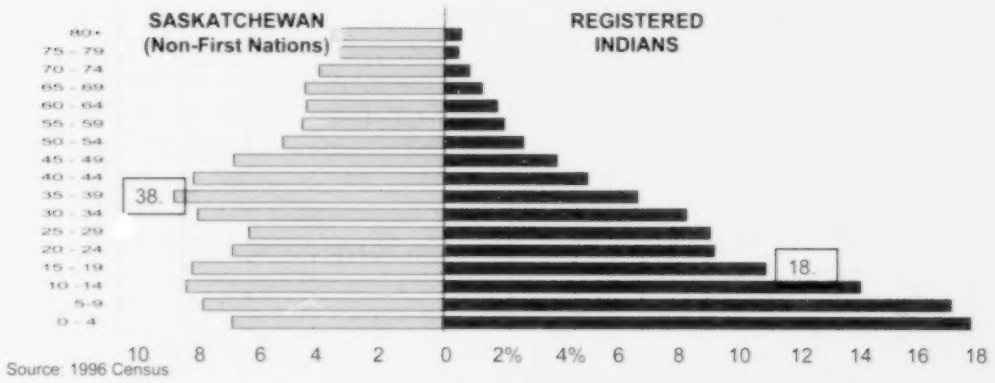
There is significant potential for the young aboriginal population as tomorrow's workforce. This is particularly so if the participation rates for aboriginals increases from current levels.

Rural Employment Patterns - Aboriginal Population

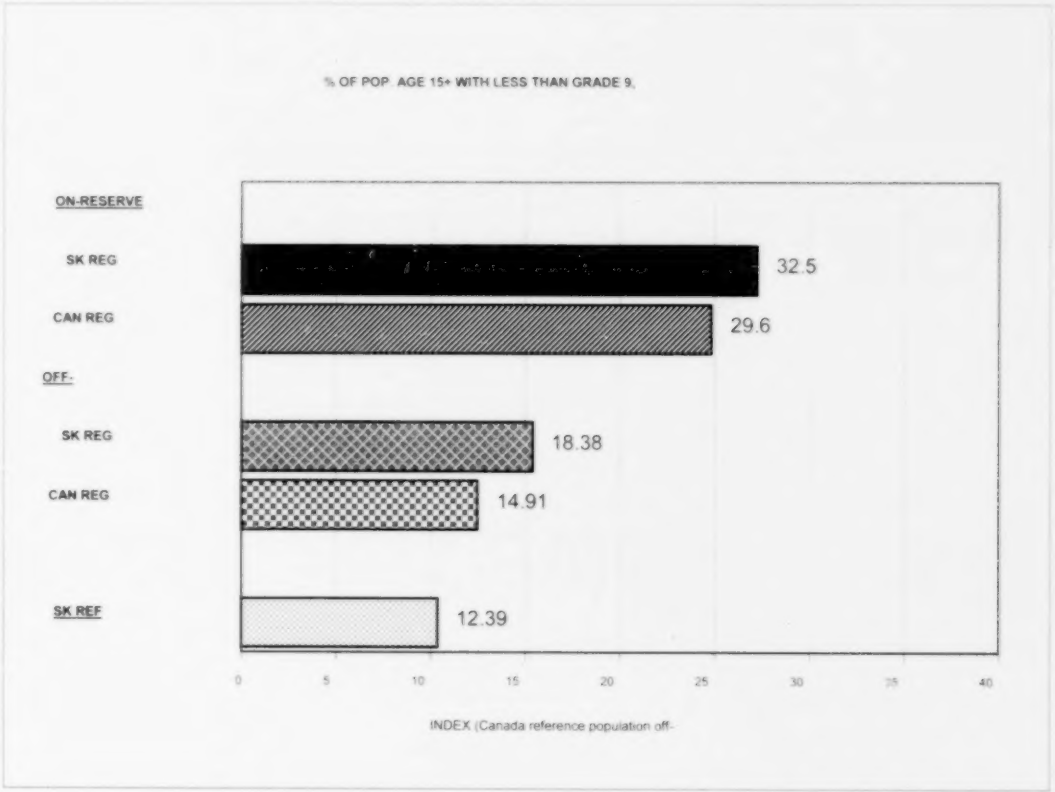


- These data are from the Census rather than the Labour Force Survey.
- There is a huge gap between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal employment rates. It is most pronounced on Reserve.

Age Distribution of Saskatchewan First Nations and Non-First Nations



Source: 1996 Census



Rural Employment 11

ACRE recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan make further efforts to build relationships between Aboriginal individuals, communities and groups, involved governments, educational institutions and employers to provide adequate opportunities for Aboriginal students. More must be done to respond to the training needs and initiatives of Aboriginal people.

ACRE has identified a lack of funds for the delivery of Basic Education in rural Saskatchewan. Basic Education is upgrading, to allow those who have left school to achieve their grade 12. An increase in funding for basic education with a set amount targeted to rural areas could lower wait times. Currently there are significant wait times for those who have left school and wish to upgrade. The Provincial Training Allowance provides funding to learners while they receive Basic Education.

Rural Employment 12

ACRE recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan increase Basic Education programming and the Provincial Training Allowance to enroll more students in Basic Education.

3. Immigration

ACRE has identified that there are worker and skill shortages in some areas and more are anticipated in the future. ACRE has identified the need for increased immigration to meet some of these worker and skill shortages.

Migrant Worker Program

A pilot program has been introduced in Saskatchewan for bringing in seasonal agricultural workers under the Commonwealth Caribbean and Mexican Agricultural Worker Program (CCMAWP). This program has been used extensively in labour intensive industries in other provinces for many years.

The CCMAWP is established by the Government of Canada under a formal agreement with the governments of Mexico and the Commonwealth Caribbean nations. Under this agreement, conditions of employment are established including wage rates, government approved housing, health coverage, allowable deductions for travel expenses and Workers Compensation coverage. Approximately 18,000 workers come into Canada each year under the program, with the majority going to Ontario.

A pilot program was established in Saskatchewan in response to a chronic labour shortage in certain sectors. The vegetable, fruit, nursery and honey industries completed diagnostic studies on their labour situations for evaluation by Human Resources Development Canada in determining the need for the program.

For a number of years, labour intensive industries, particularly vegetable production, expressed concern that they could not access adequate labour supplies. A number of factors including declining rural populations, a reluctance to work at jobs requiring a high level of manual labour and student work forces that are not available for spring or harvest seasons influenced these concerns. They expressed interest in the CCMAWP, available through Human Resources Development Canada, for similar industries in other provinces.

In 2002, four industries; vegetable, nursery, apiculture and fruit, conducted diagnostic surveys of their industries to determine the need for labour, current labour costs, implications of labour shortages, etc. for consideration by Human Resources Development Canada. A number of provincial departments took part in the discussion including, at that time, Agriculture, Food and Rural Revitalization, Social Services, Health, Labour, Learning, Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs and Corrections and Public Safety. It was decided to implement a pilot program under the CCMMWP for the four industries starting in 2003. Four employers used the program covering vegetables, fruit and nursery production. Approximately 24 workers came to Saskatchewan under the program in 2003.

Lack of a stable labour force will continue to stifle growth in these industries. While the honey industry did not avail itself to this program in 2003, a number of large producers are having difficulty in sourcing adequate labour. Increased production of these high value crops will increase direct employment opportunities on farm and indirect jobs in service and processing.

The program is not a cheap source of labour given the wage rates established by HRDC, the up front costs of bringing workers in, housing costs, etc. However it does allow producers to acquire a core of workers who will be available throughout the production season. The program will only suit a limited number of growers and given the size of our horticulture industry, there will not be large numbers of workers coming to Saskatchewan each year. This program is seen as an effective mechanism to source trained labour for specific industries where access to local or Canadian workers is not available.

Saskatchewan Immigrant Nominee Program

The Saskatchewan Immigrant Nominee Program (SINP) helps employers bring skilled workers to our province. SINP is one mechanism available to employers to permanently hire qualified, foreign, skilled workers. Until recently, the program accepted skilled workers in 12 occupations or individual jobs where there was a demonstrated shortage.

Effective January, 2005, the provincial government has expanded the program significantly. Under the new rules, employers can now hire qualified immigrants for most technical, trade and professional occupations in the province. Previously, those 12

occupations covered only about 10,000 jobs in the province, or a mere 2 per cent of Saskatchewan's labour market.

By expanding this program, the provincial government is addressing a key recommendations in this report, which is to enhance the SINP.

Recommendations

Rural Employment 13

ACRE recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan substantially expand the existing programs (Saskatchewan Immigrant Nominee Program and Migrant Workers' Program) in response to identified skill and worker shortages.

Rural Employment 14

ACRE recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan continue ongoing identification of employment skill needs and labour shortages.

Rural Employment 15

ACRE recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan enhance cultural and other support mechanisms for immigrants, such as; language, settlement funding and recognition of bona fide foreign credentials.

ACRE understands that immigrants face barriers such as the lengthy time it takes to process applications (work permit, permanent residence...). International students are potential immigrants, but they are facing particularly difficult financial situations as they are not permitted to work off campus. These barriers need to be addressed if Saskatchewan is to attract more immigrants.

Rural Employment 16

ACRE recommends that the Government of Saskatchewan aggressively examine the barriers faced by immigrants, and promote immigration programs to employers and potential immigrants.

Appendix I

ACRE Rural Employment Subcommittee Members

Members:
Loren Katzenberger, (co-chair) Past Chair, Prairie Implement Manufacturers Association
Danea Armstrong-Knittig, (co-chair) Past Manager, Investment Attraction, Saskatoon Regional Economic Development Authority
Ernie Barber, Dean, College of Agriculture, University of Saskatchewan
Germaine Dauk , Past Chair, Pulse Canada
Clay Dowling, Past President, Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce
Deborah Ehmann, Canadian Agriculture Safety Program Officer
Bert Harman, CEO, Starr Eggs
George Lafond, Special Advisor to the President on Aboriginal Affairs, U of S
Fay Myers, Chief Executive Officer, Parkland Regional College
John Serhienko, President, Agriculture in the Classroom
Hugh Wagner, General Secretary, Grain Services Union
Grace Whittington, Past President, Saskatchewan Food Processors Association

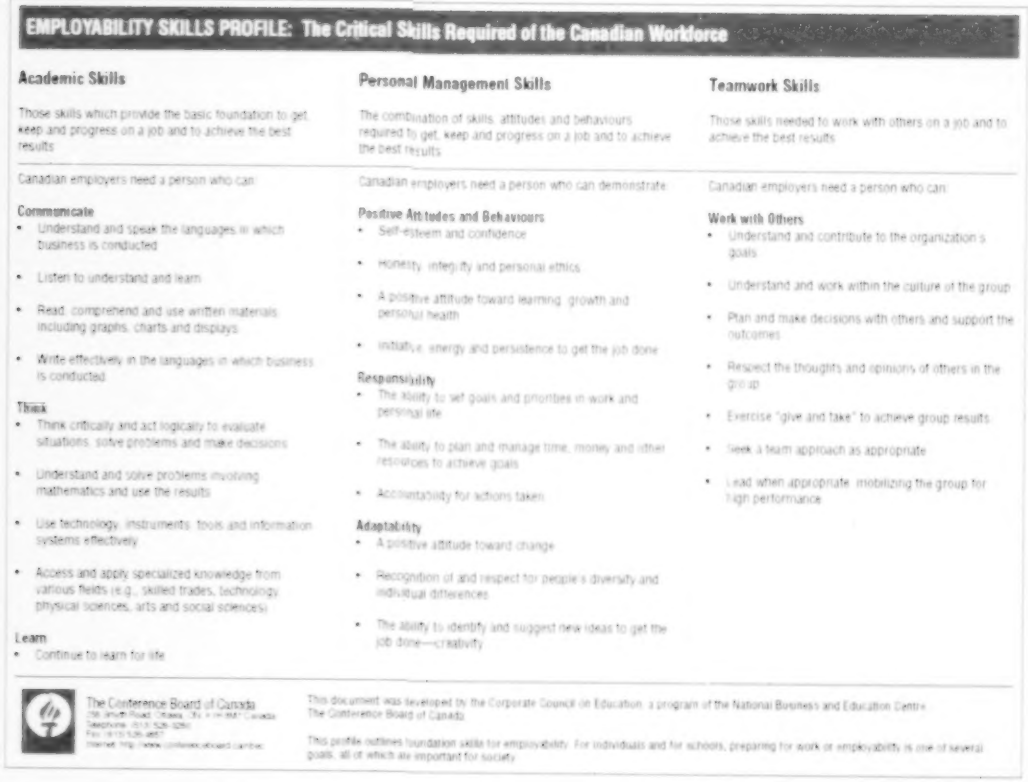
Resource Persons – Saskatchewan Agriculture, Food and Rural Revitalization
Jacquie Gibney
Rick Ashton
Garth Lipinski
Lorne Tangjerd

Appendix I (con't)

Key Presentations to the Subcommittee

- Mark Partridge – U of S
  - The Rural Urban Divide – Rural Saskatchewan at a Crossroads
- Doug Elliot – Sask Trends Monitor
  - Rural Employment in Saskatchewan
- Holly Heatherington - Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce
  - Action Saskatchewan Human Resource Plan
- Wayne Mackenzie - Government Relations and Aboriginal Affairs (GRAA)
  - Aboriginal Employment
- George Lafond – U of S
  - Aboriginal Employment
- Eric Johansen – GRAA
  - Immigration Trends and Policy
- Vic Krahn - Lakeshore Gardens, Saskatoon
  - Migrant Worker Experience
- Kris Wall – Sask Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission
  - Apprenticeship Training
- Bob Guthrie - Sask Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission
  - Apprenticeship Training
- Kevin Wilson – Lawyer
  - Labour Legislation
- Hugh Wagner – Grain Services Union
  - Labour Legislation

Appendix II



EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS PROFILE: The Critical Skills Required of the Canadian Workforce

Academic Skills

Those skills which provide the basic foundation to get, keep and progress on a job and to achieve the best results

Canadian employers need a person who can:

Communicate

- Understand and speak the languages in which business is conducted
- Listen to understand and learn
- Read, comprehend and use written materials including graphs, charts and displays
- Write effectively in the languages in which business is conducted

Think

- Think critically and act logically to evaluate situations, solve problems and make decisions
- Understand and solve problems involving mathematics and use the results
- Use technology, instruments, tools and information systems effectively
- Access and apply specialized knowledge from various fields (e.g., skilled trades, technology, physical sciences, arts and social sciences)

Learn

- Continue to learn for life

Personal Management Skills

The combination of skills, attitudes and behaviours required to get, keep and progress on a job and to achieve the best results

Canadian employers need a person who can demonstrate:

Positive Attitudes and Behaviours

- Self-esteem and confidence
- Honesty, integrity and personal ethics
- A positive attitude toward learning, growth and personal health
- Initiative, energy and persistence to get the job done

Responsibility

- The ability to set goals and priorities in work and personal life
- The ability to plan and manage time, money and other resources to achieve goals
- Accountability for actions taken

Adaptability

- A positive attitude toward change
- Recognition of and respect for people's diversity and individual differences
- The ability to identify and suggest new ideas to get the job done—creativity

Teamwork Skills

Those skills needed to work with others on a job and to achieve the best results

Canadian employers need a person who can:

Work with Others

- Understand and contribute to the organization's goals
- Understand and work within the culture of the group
- Plan and make decisions with others and support the outcomes
- Respect the thoughts and opinions of others in the group
- Exercise "give and take" to achieve group results
- Seek a team approach as appropriate
- Lead when appropriate, mobilizing the group for high performance

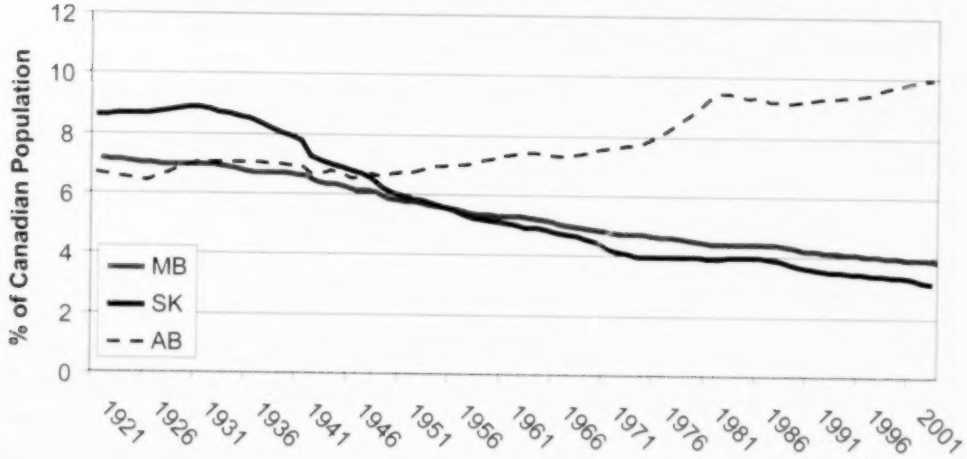
The Conference Board of Canada

This document was developed by the Corporate Council on Education, a program of the National Business and Education Centre, The Conference Board of Canada.

This profile outlines foundation skills for employability. For individuals and for schools, preparing for work or employability is one of several goals, all of which are important for society.

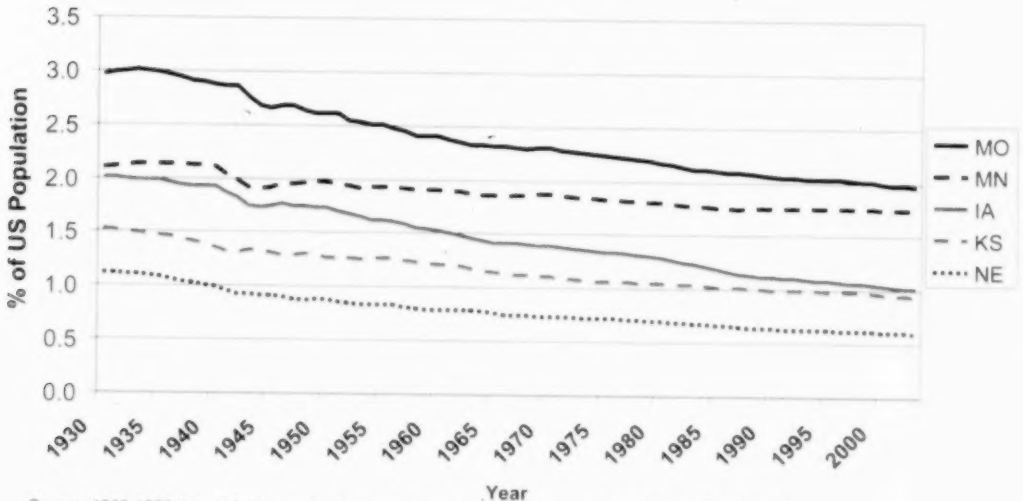
Appendix III-a

Share of Canadian Population in Prairie Provinces 1921-2003



Source:
1921 to 1970-CANSIM I Matrix 0060 Table D14-D26 Feb 14, 2004
1971 to 2001-CANSIM II IMDB 3604, Table 510001, Feb 14, 2004
2002 to 2003 http://www.statcan.ca/Daily/English/031218/d031218c.htm#tab3ftnotepr Feb 14, 2004

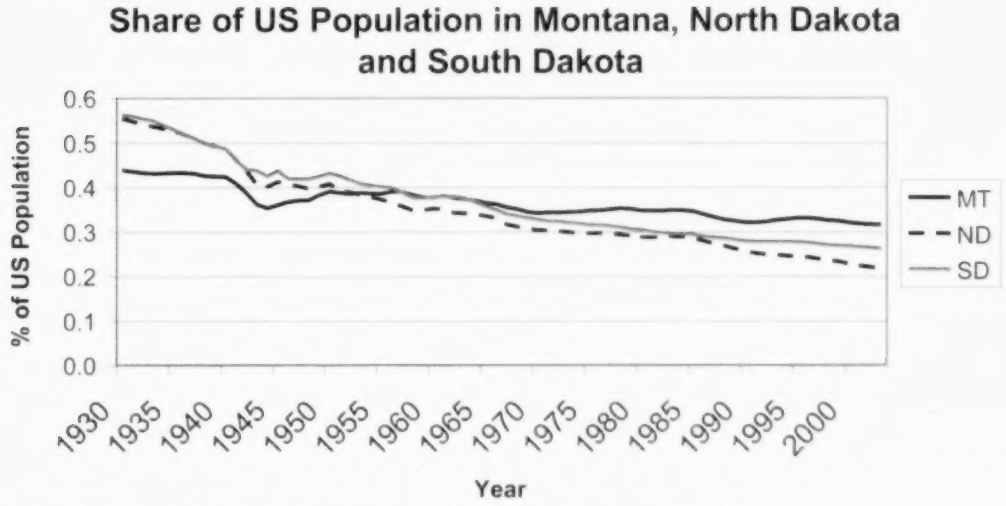
Share of US population in Plains region



Source: 1930-1989 data is from http://eire.census.gov/popest/archives/state/st_stts.php Feb 25, 2004
1990-1999 data is from http://eire.census.gov/popest/archives/state/st-99-3.txt Feb 25, 2004
2000-2003 data is from http://eire.census.gov/popest/data/states/tables/NST-EST2003-01.php Feb 25, 2004

Source: Mark Partridge, U. of S. (Note: MO-Missouri; MN- Minnesota; IA-Iowa; KS – Kansas, NE - Nebraska)

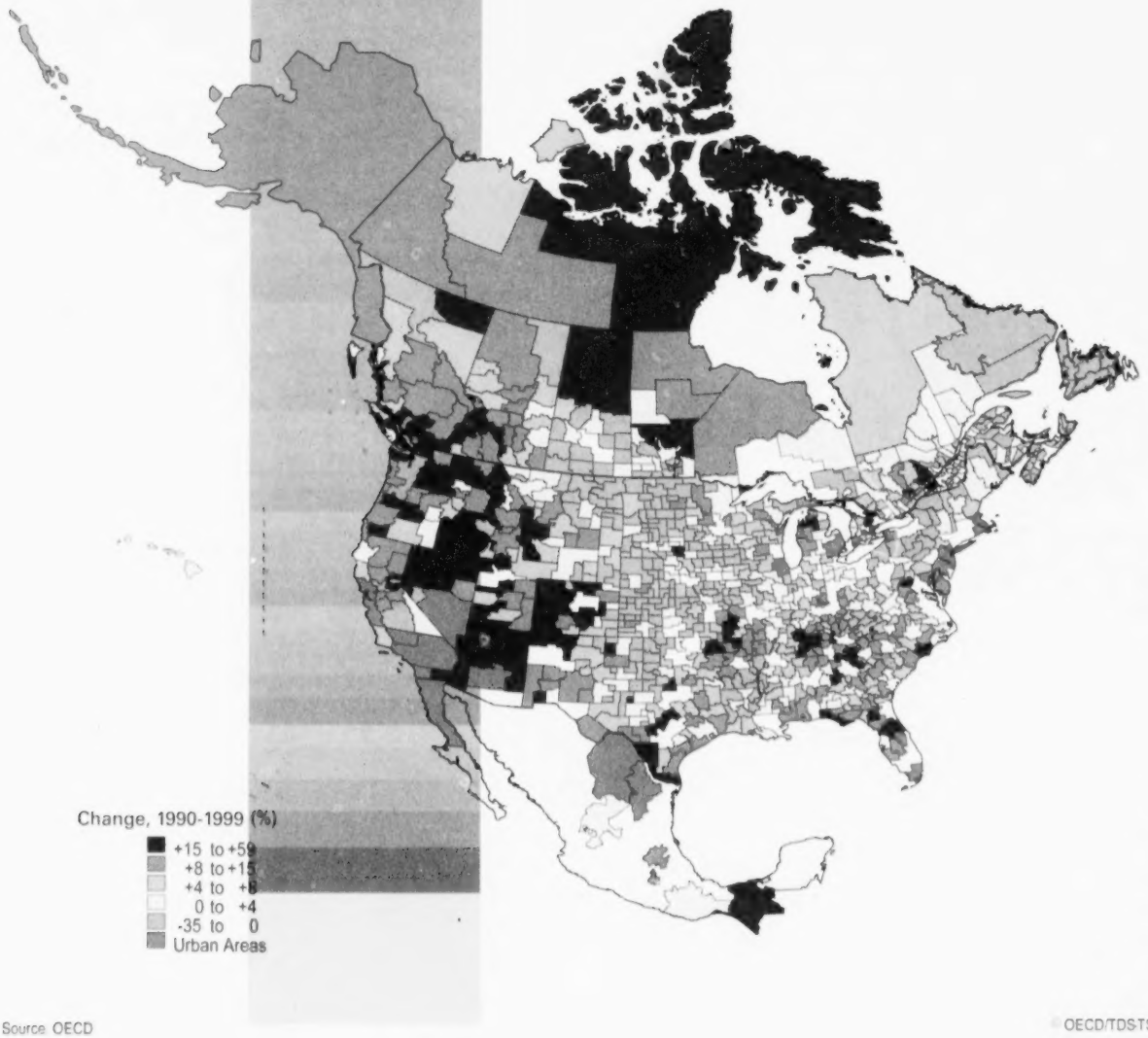
Appendix III b



Source: 1930-1989 data is from http //eire census gov/popest/archives/state/st_stts php Feb 25, 2004
1990-1999 data is from http //eire census gov/popest/archives/state/st-99-3 txt Feb 25, 2004
2000-2003 data is from http //eire census gov/popest/data/states/tables/NST-EST2003-01 php Feb 25, 2004

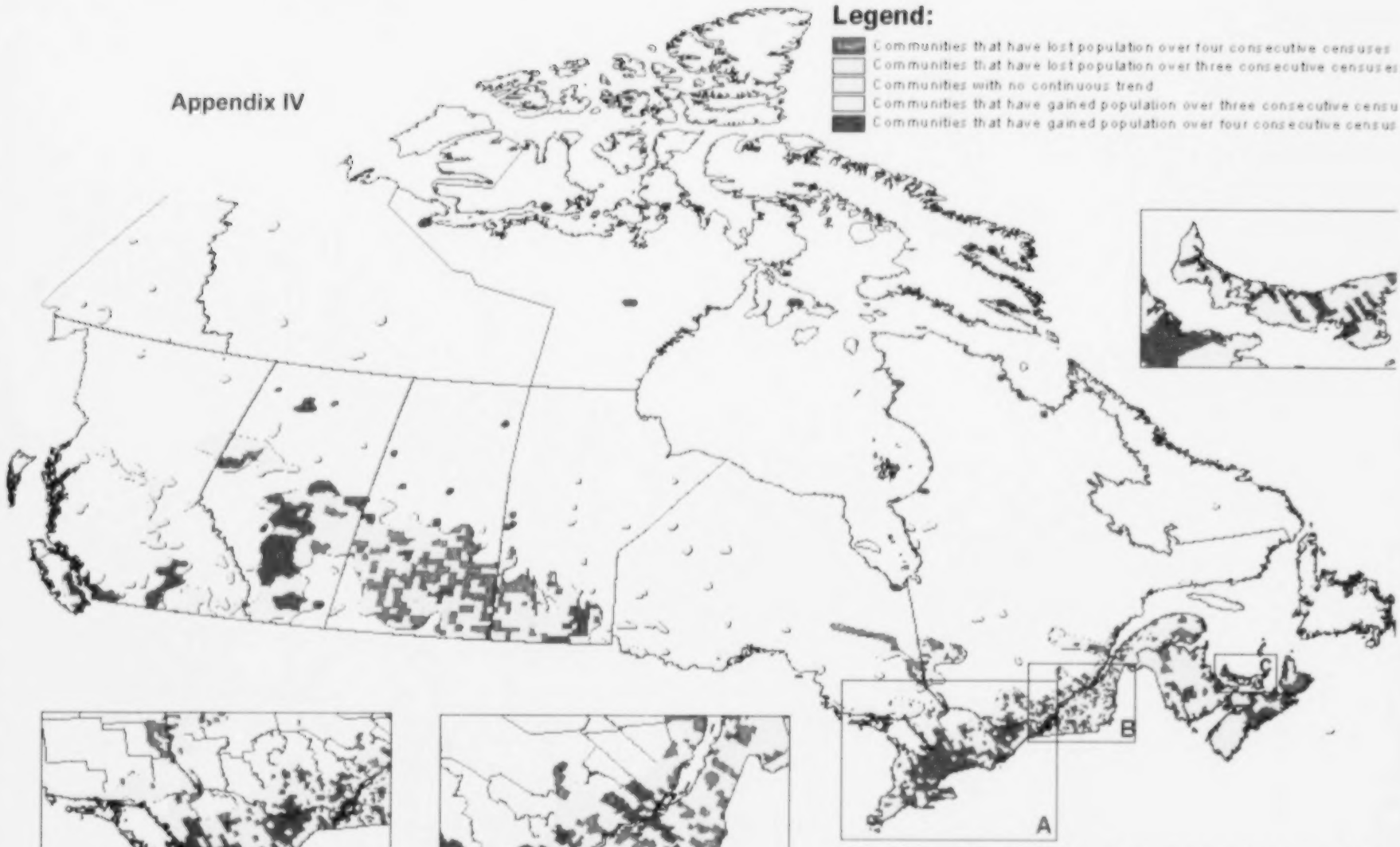
Source: Mark Partridge, U of S.

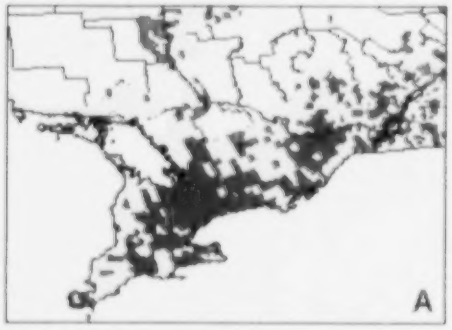
Appendix III c : Demographic change in North American Rural Areas

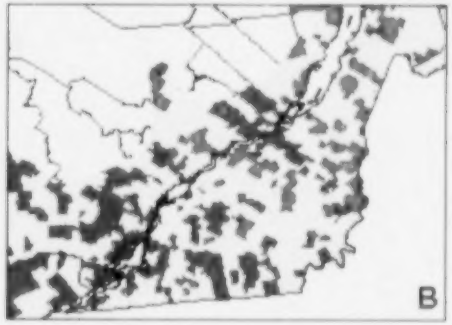


Population (% Change) 1990-1999

Appendix IV


Legend:
Communities that have lost population over four consecutive censuses
Communities that have lost population over three consecutive censuses
Communities with no continuous trend
Communities that have gained population over three consecutive censu
Communities that have gained population over four consecutive census
A
B
C





Continuous population gain is defined as communities (census consolidate subdivisions) that reported more residents in each intercensal period: 1981 to 1986 and 1986 to 1991 and 1991 to 1996 and 1996 to 2001. Continuous population loss is defined as communities (census consolidated subdivision that reported fewer residents in each intercensal period. Census Consolidat Subdivisions are based on 1996 geography.

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 1981

Map produced by the Spatial Analysis and Geomatics Applications section (SAGA), Agriculture Division, Statistics Cana

Appendix V

KEY PROVISIONS OF LABOUR LEGISLATION IN ALBERTA, SASKATCHEWAN AND MANITOBA

(Saskatchewan Labour, March 15, 2005)

The following tables outline key aspects of major labour legislation in Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba. Generally speaking there is little substantive difference between Saskatchewan's Labour laws and those of Alberta and Manitoba.

THE OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY ACT

	Saskatchewan	Alberta	Manitoba
Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee	Mandatory for employers of 10 or more workers.	May be required by the Minister.	Mandatory for employers of 20 or more workers and on certain construction sites.
Occupational Health and Safety Representatives	Mandatory for employers of 4 to 10 workers.	No provision.	Mandatory where there are 10 or more workers, but no committee and on certain construction sites.
Violence	Policy mandatory at workplaces where violence has occurred, or may occur.	Policy and procedures mandatory where a risk assessment identifies violence as an existing or potential hazard.	No provision.
Harassment	Mandatory for employers to have and enforce a harassment policy.	No provision.	No provision.
Offences/Penalties For Contravention of the Act	Maximum fine: 1st offence: $50,000 & $5,000/day 2nd offence: $100,000 & $10,000/day; may include prison time.	Maximum fine: 1st offence: $500,000 and $30,000/day 2nd offence: $1,000,000 & $60,000/day; may include prison time	Maximum fine: 1st offence: $150,000 & $25,000/day 2nd offence: $300,000 & $50,000/day; may include prison time.
Right to Refuse Dangerous Work	Yes	Yes	Yes

THE LABOUR STANDARDS ACT / EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS CODE

	Saskatchewan	Alberta	Manitoba
Exclusions from the entire Act	Farming, ranching or market gardening (not egg hatcheries, greenhouses, nurseries, bush clearing operations and commercial hog operations) and family-only businesses.	No employees are excluded from the entire Act. Farm workers are covered for meal breaks, payment of wages, maternity leave and notice of termination. Municipal police service employees are covered for maternity and parental leave.	Farmers, fishers, horticulturalists, certain domestics, professionals & students-in-training, volunteers, persons in work programs, *Election Act* workers.
Minimum Wage	$6.65 November 1, 2002.	$5.90 October 1, 1999	$7.00 April 1, 2004.
Overtime	After 8 hours/day; 40hrs/week	After 8 hours/day; 44 hours/week	After 8 hours/day; 40 hours/week
Notable Overtime Exemptions	Managers, teachers, professional practitioners, some salespersons, certain northern employees, loggers, family care providers, residential-care facility operators.	Certain ranch/farm employees, managers, salespersons, professionals, domestics Special provisions for ambulance attendants, certain field service workers, highway construction & irrigation workers, nursery workers, cab drivers, and truckers	Certain salespersons, employees in a business only employing family members, employees in a theatre, hotel or restaurant in a rural location, employees who are under 16, certain crown employees, farmers, fishers, horticulturalists, certain domestics, professionals, election workers, employees in training
Number of Public Holidays	9	9	8
Annual Holidays	3 weeks/year; 4 weeks after 10 years.	2 weeks/year; 3 weeks after 5 years.	2 weeks/year; 3 weeks after 5 years.
Notice of Individual Termination	Graduated notice: 1 week after 3 months to 8 weeks after 10 years.	Graduated notice: 1 week after 3 months to 8 weeks after 10 years.	Notice: one pay period or 30 days, whichever is greater.
Notice of Group Termination	10-50 employees = 4 weeks, 50-100 employees = 8 weeks, 100 + employees = 12 weeks.	Same as individual termination notice.	50-100 employees = 10 weeks, 101-299 employees = 14 weeks, 300 + employees = 18 weeks

Maternity Leave	18 weeks.	15 weeks.	17 weeks.
Adoption Leave	18 weeks.	Included in Parental Leave.	Included in Parental Leave.
Parental Leave	34 weeks if receiving maternity/adoption leave, 37 weeks if not.	37 weeks.	37 weeks.
Bereavement Leave	5 unpaid days.	No provision.	No provision.
Compassionate Leave	12 weeks per 52-week period (extension to 16 weeks in some cases)	No provision	8 weeks
Pro-rated Benefits for Part-time Employees	Provided in non-unionized firms with 10 or more full-time employees who receive benefits.	No provision.	No provision.

THE TRADE UNION ACT/ LABOUR RELATIONS CODE

	Saskatchewan	Alberta	Manitoba
Picketing	No power to regulate picketing in *The Trade Union Act*. Picketing is regulated by the courts.	Has the power to regulate picketing.	No power to regulate picketing.
Certification	***No*** *Mandatory vote.* **25%** *Minimum support for representation vote.* **50%** *Minimum support for certification without a vote.*	*Mandatory vote* **40%** *Minimum support for representation vote.*	***No*** *Mandatory vote* **40%** *Minimum support for representation vote.* **65%** *Minimum support for certification without a vote.*
Notice Before Strike	48 hours.	72 hours.	No requirement.
Third Party Assistance Before Strike/Lockout	Not required.	Formal appointment of mediator required.	Not required.
Vote on Last Offers	On request after 30 strike days.	On request after exchange of bargaining proposals.	At Minister's discretion when public interest is affected.
Duration of Strike	No provision.	2 years from commencement.	No provision.
Communication Between Employees and Employers	Not prohibited.	Not prohibited.	Not prohibited.
Transfer of	Yes	Yes, does not mention	Yes

Obligation Including Business Mergers and Where "Deemed Sale of Business"		mergers or amalgamations.	
Transfer of Obligation Application Where Business Transfers From Federal to Provincial Legislation	Yes	No provision.	Yes
Prohibition of Strikes/Lockouts in Public Sectors	No	Yes, except Public School Teachers.	Yes, except Public Servants, Hospital employees, University Professors and Crown Corporation employees.

CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY LABOUR RELATIONS

	Saskatchewan	Alberta	Manitoba
Common or Related Employer Provisions (Spin-offs)	Prohibited	Prohibited	Nothing specific to the construction industry.
Representative Employer Associations (REO's)	Designated in the CILRA.	Determined by the Labour Relations Board.	Not mentioned.
Trade Divisions	Determined by the Minister of Labour.	Determined by the Labour Relations Board.	Not mentioned.
Fair Wage Legislation	No legislation.	No legislation.	Minimum wage rates established for all classes of workers employed in the construction of crown projects.
Strikes and Lockouts	Mandatory conciliation.	Trade unions must apply to the Labour Relations Board for a supervised strike vote after a 14 day cooling off period once mediated talks have broken down.	No strike or lockout provisions specific to the construction industry.

COMMUNICATION WITH EMPLOYEES

Updated: November 4, 2003
Saskatchewan Labour

Federal	**Employer**: An employer can communicate with employees in response to propaganda that may paint an inaccurate picture. The employer can not use intimidation, threats, promises of reward or other means of coercion to interfere with, undermine or derogate the union. At no time can the employer malign or demean the union. (section 94(2)(c)) **Employee**: There is a general prohibition that no person shall use intimidation or coercion to compel a person to become, refrain from becoming, or cease to be a member of a trade union. (section 96)
Alberta	**Employer**: An employer may not use intimidation, dismissal, threat of dismissal, a pecuniary penalty, or other means to compel a person to refrain from becoming or cease becoming a member, officer, or representative of a union. (section 146) **Employee**: No union shall: use coercion, or intimidation to encourage or discourage membership in or activity in or for a union. (section 149)
British Columbia	**Employer**: An employer shall not deny employment or discriminate against any person because of union membership; nor seek to influence an employee from becoming or continuing to be a union member by intimidation, threat of dismissal, imposition of penalty, or promise of more favourable terms of employment. (section 6) **Employee**: The Code enables a trade union to communication with employees on a statement of facts or opinion reasonably held with respect to the employers business. (section 8) The Code further states that a trade union must not use coercion or intimidation of any kind that could reasonably have the effect of compelling or inducing a person to become or refrain from becoming or to continue or cease to be a member of a trade union. (section 9).
Manitoba	**Employer**: It is an unfair labour practice if an employer seeks by intimidation, coercion, threat of dismissal, or the imposition of a pecuniary or offer penalty or by promise, a wage increase, or any offer means to compel or induce any person to refrain from becoming a member or officer of a union ... (section 17) **Employee**: A union commits an unfair labour practice if it seeks by intimidation, coercion, threat of dismissal or loss of employment, by the imposition of penalties, or by undue influence to compel or induce a person to become or refrain from becoming a member or officer of a union. (section 19)
Ontario	**Employer**: Employers are forbidden to participate in or to interfere with the formation or administration of a trade union, or the representation of employees by a trade union, or to contribute financially or offer support to a trade union. However, employers retain the right to express their views provided they do not use coercion, intimidation, threats, promises or undue influence. (section 70) **Employee**: Unions may not attempt to persuade employees to become or refrain from becoming or continue as union members at the employees' place of work. (section 77)

New Brunswick	**Employer**: An employer, or an employer's organization or representative has the freedom to express his or its views so long as he or it does not exercise that freedom in a manner that is coercive, intimidating, threatening, or intended to unduly influence any person. (section 3(5)) **Employee**: Nothing in the Act deprives a trade union or council of trade unions or representatives of the freedom to express its or his views so long as it or he does not exercise that freedom in a manner that is coercive, intimidating, threatening, or intended to unduly influence any person. (section 5(4))
Newfoundland	**Employer**: An employer or a person acting on behalf of an employer shall not seek by intimidation, threat of dismissal or other kind of threat, or by the imposition of a monetary or other penalty, or by other means to compel a person to refrain from becoming or stop being a member, officer or representative of a trade union ... (section 25) **Employee**: An employee, or person acting on behalf of a trade union, shall not use coercion or intimidation with a view to encourage or discourage membership in or activity in or for a trade union ... (section 28)
Nova Scotia	**Employer**: No employer and no person acting on behalf of an employer shall seek, by intimidation, threat of dismissal or any other kind of threat, by the imposition of a pecuniary or other penalty or by any other means, to compel a person to refrain from becoming or to cease to be a member, officer or representative of a trade union. (section 53(3)(e)) **Employee**: No provision.
Prince Edward Island	**Employer**: An employer, an employers organization, or any other person acting on their behalf is prohibited from suspending, transferring, laying off, discharging, using threats, or undue influence, or otherwise discriminating against an employee because he or she is a member or has applied for membership in a trade union. (section 10(1)(c)) **Employee**: A trade union is prohibited from using coercion, intimidation of any kind with regard to membership or activity in a trade union or labour organization. (section 10(2))
Quebec	**Employer and Employee**: No person shall use intimidation or threats to induce anyone to become, refrain from becoming or cease to be a member of an association of employees or an employers association. (section 13)
Saskatchewan	**Employer**: It shall be an unfair labour practice for an employer, an employer's agent or any other person acting on behalf of the employer: (a) in any manner, including by communication, to interfere with, restrain, intimidate, threaten or coerce an employee in the exercise of any right conferred by this Act; (section 11(1)) **Employee**: It shall be an unfair labour practice for an employee, trade union or any other person to interfere with, restrain, intimidate, threaten or coerce an employee with a view to encouraging or discouraging membership in or activity in or for a labour organization. (section 11(2))

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